

196
190

Considerations humbly Proposed for preventing Intelligence and Correspondency with France.

THAT there is a Correspondency with *France* maintained and kept on Foot as frequently as in times of Peace by Sloops and small Vessels, which carry over Wooll, and return with *French* Points and other fine Goods, and that by the same Conveyance, disaffected Persons, and Letters of Intelligence, are also carried to and fro, can be made appear by many late Instances.

And Whereas the last Sessions of Parliament the Act made in the First Year of Their Majesties Reign, to Prevent the Exportation of Wool to France, was continued for a longer time; yet by the three foregoing years experience, it is evident it took no effect, the only reason being, that although by the said Act there were several fitting persons named as Commissioners to see the Laws put in Execution, yet there was no provision made thereby for paying and satisfying of such persons they should employ.

And that there is an Absolute Necessity, more especially at this time, that the said Correspondency and Intelligence should be prevented (all must be sensible of) and that the same could not hitherto be done by the Officers of the *Custom-House* is evident by matter of fact, they having the King's other business to mind, neither doth it consist with their interest, wholly to prevent the Exportation of Wool (by which means the said Correspondency is kept on Foot) for then all advantage by Seizures would cease.

But that it may be effectually done if a due course be taken, is evident by an Example in the Late King's Reign, when a Commission was granted to several Merchants and others, to put the Laws in Execution against the Offenders, Whereupon some of the said Commissioners employed several Persons of their own choosing, whose integrity and industry had that good effect, and so much alarmed the *French*, that in a very short time it caused the price of our Wool to advance there near double of what it was before; and if there had been a reasonable sum of Moneys allowed the said Commissioners, for enabling them to have kept on foot the said Undertaking, they had beyond all doubt, put a final End to that mischievous Trade, but having expended large sums of their own, and no provision made for their reimbursement, they were forced to desist.

Therefore, And in as much as the Factors of *Blackwell-Hall*, have consented and agreed by a Writing under their hands, to allow a proportion for all sorts of Woollen Goods they should sell towards maintaining the charge of preventing the Exportation of Wool, and that most of the said Factors and principal Clothiers in *England*, have also Petitioned and Addressed to their respective Members, that the Commissioners named as aforesaid, might be legally impowered to Collect and Receive their said voluntary Subscriptions, as being sensible their interest, as well as their zeal will quicken their care and industry therein.

It is therefore humbly offered as the only Expedient that is remaining, or can be found to prevent the Correspondency and Intelligence with so powerful an Enemy as are the *French*, that the Commissioners named by the aforesaid Act of Parliament, or so many of them as shall be thought fit may be legally impowered to collect and receive the forementioned Contributions, or else that some reasonable Fund be otherwise assigned them for paying and satisfying such Persons as they shall think fit to employ, and the said Commissioners to be accountable for the disposal of what they shall so receive in manner as shall be thought meet.

Note, That at this very time, the Boats and Sloops which carry out our Wool, take in large quantities of Corn for Ballast.

January 9. 1694.